

Dear St Stephen's family,

We enjoyed meeting some of you during our initial visit to St Stephens last year and look forward to the opportunity of meeting the rest of the family in the near future. It was also a great joy to find that so many old friends are now based at St Stephen's, many of these dear friends have been instrumental in our walk of faith, through their encouragement, teaching and inspiration; you know who you are and we give thanks to God for bringing our paths back together.

A little about each of us.

Charlie is the youngest of our tribe at four and eleven twelfths. He loves Ben Ten and, for a future vicar's son, has an alarming appetite for shooting visitors who come to the house; be warned! Charlie loves to sing very enthusiastically and lists Meatloaf, Mika and Thin Lizzy as his musical inspiration.

Libby (9) is the creative entrepreneur in the family. She loves anything arty and cooking. She will always be eager to put her baking skills into action and is a dab hand at cakes and tagliatelli.

Jessie (10) loves playing her clarinet and reading, devouring books at a rate that her dad only wishes he could match. Jessie is co-owner with Giles of Monty our Pointer/Springer cross although dad seems to get the dog walking part of the deal.

Rachel was brought up locally going to school in Godalming and RNS in Haslemere. After University and a year with Tear Fund in Zimbabwe, Rachel trained as an accountant and has worked in private practice in the local area before moving to Bristol. She has found this time of training to be an amazing period of God releasing new gifts and interests and she has taken a central role both in the life of the College spouses group and 'Love Running' which last year co-ordinated the biggest single mass entry into a UK road race here in Bristol raising £70,000 for local and international charities. See www.loverunning.org.

Giles was also a local lad going to schools in Guildford and West Sussex. Before being called to ordination Giles worked for over 20 years in Estate Agency. His passion, in both his career and ministry, is playing a part in the transformation that takes place when people begin to explore the potential that God has placed in each of us. Overcoming fear and brokenness, discovering our true identity in Christ and claiming the freedom that comes from being a follower of Jesus are all part of the personal journey of faith that Giles has experienced and these things have deeply impacted his view of ministry.

Lastly, Rachel and I were struck recently by the picture that Jesus gives to his disciples in John 14. Jesus speaks of making a place ready for his disciples in the same way as a bridegroom would make a place ready for his bride by extending the family home to accommodate this new branch of the family. We sense that Jesus is making a place for us at St Stephens, we are joining your tribe and we can't begin to tell you how thrilled we all are about it. We pray that over the years to come we can play our part in supporting the family business and in building ever increasing extensions to the tent.

With love

Giles, Rachel, Jessie, Libby and Charlie

